

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 3, 2009

The Honorable James Oberstar
Chairman
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
2165 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Mica
Ranking Member
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
2163 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
Highways and Transit Subcommittee
B-370A Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Duncan, Jr.
Ranking Member
Highways and Transit Subcommittee
B-375 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members,

We are writing to encourage you to address energy security and climate change in the Surface Transportation Authorization Bill. The Environmental Protection Agency and Energy Information Administration have calculated that the transportation sector consumes nearly 70 percent of our oil, resulting in almost 30 percent of our country's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The Transportation Authorization legislation provides Congress with a serious opportunity to lead in the battle against climate change through smarter transportation policies.

Energy security and climate change are inextricably linked with transportation: we cannot solve either problem without addressing them in transportation policy. Even with the highest vehicle efficiency standards and the best low carbon fuels policies, studies show that these technological improvements are likely to be offset by continuing growth in driving rates. Between 1977 and 2007, while the US population increased by 37 percent, driving, measured in VMT (vehicle miles of travel), grew by 110 percent, according to the U.S. Census and the Federal Highway Administration.

However, studies also show that if we give our cities, towns, counties, and transit authorities the tools and incentives to address these issues through investments in clean transportation and livable communities, they can reduce emissions and oil consumption while also providing significant additional local benefits. A recent study by the Center for Clean Air Policy (CCAP) found that with investments in "Blueprint"-style transportation planning, livable communities initiatives, clean transportation – such as public transit - and better system management, we have the ability to significantly reduce GHG at a negative cost per ton.

The CCAP study, together with several others, have found that reducing oil consumption and GHG in the transportation sector also creates local jobs through infrastructure investment while saving families money by easing the burden of transportation costs through consumer fuel and insurance cost savings. These strategies also save local and state governments money by helping

to avoid unnecessary future infrastructure costs, while spurring tax revenue growth from high value local economic development.

Recent demographic and consumer preference shifts further make the case for better integrated transportation planning. According to the Growth and Transportation Survey, conducted annually by the National Association of Realtors® and Transportation for America, Americans are seeking livable communities where they can reach their destinations through walking and public transportation. Younger families in particular prefer to live in well-planned areas where they can live, work and recreate without having to rely on a car.

President Obama and Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood have already begun a bipartisan call for livable communities and clean transportation investments in the Administration's FY2010 budget. We spend billions of dollars every year on our transportation system and have an opportunity this year to craft the Authorization bill to build stronger communities where families save money, have more travel options, and reduce our carbon footprint. We look forward to working with you to seize this opportunity in the Transportation Authorization.


Sincerely,


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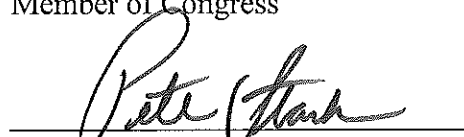

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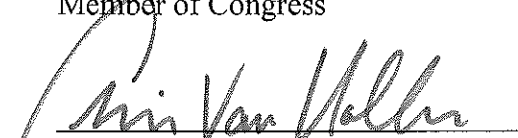

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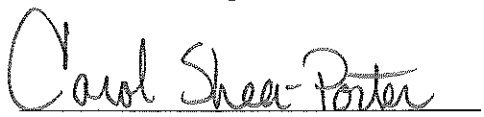

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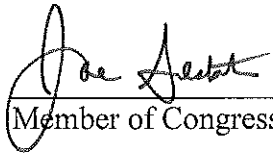

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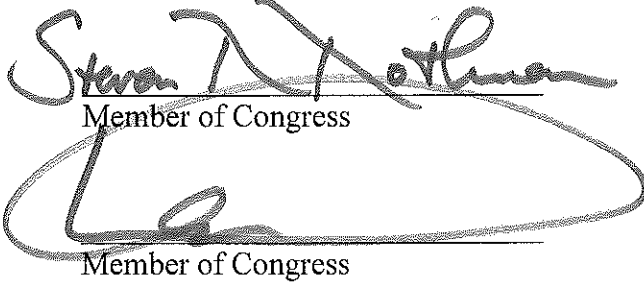

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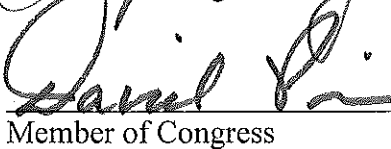

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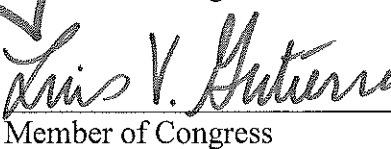

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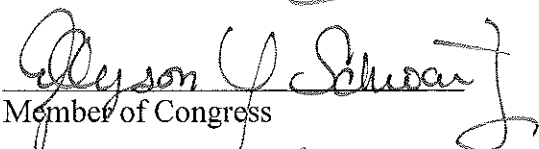

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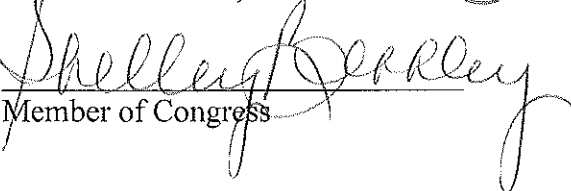

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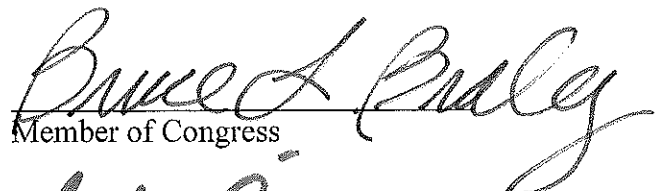

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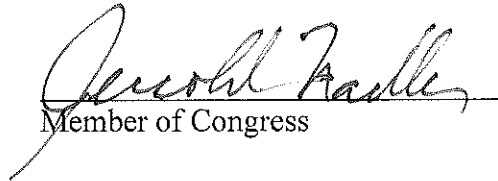

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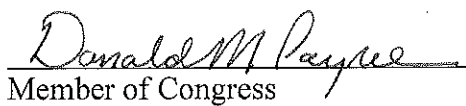

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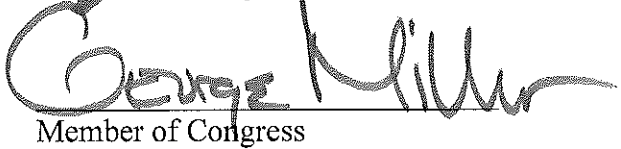

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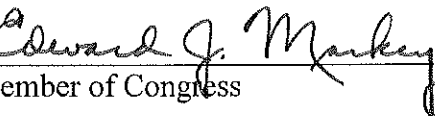

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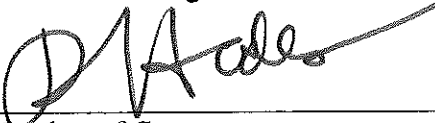

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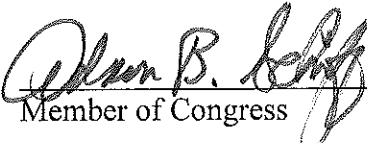

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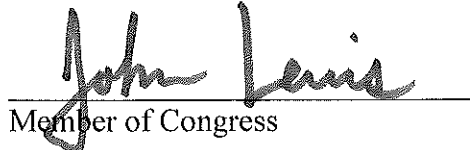

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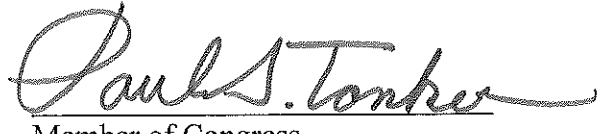

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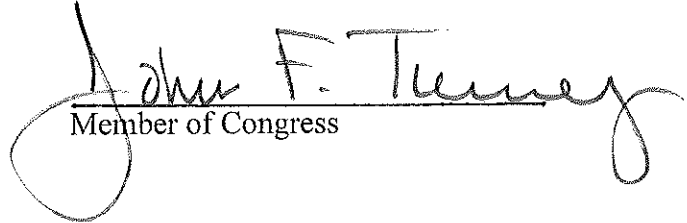

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Letter on Transportation and Global Warming Signatories

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Chris Van Hollen
Barbara Lee
David Price
Shea Porter
Hank Johnson
Jay Inslee
Raul Grijalva
Dina Titus
Schwartz
James Moran
Michael Honda
Kurt Schrader
James McGovern
George Miller
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Steve Rothman
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